

REMARKS

Applicants request reconsideration of the application in view of the following remarks.

Claims 1-11 and 13-18 are pending. Claim 1 was amended to correct informality and to emphasize the fact the treatment step is done during drilling. It is believed that no new matter has been added by way of any amendments provided herein.

General Remark

Applicants want to re-phrase arguments submitted in last office action. When applicants were stating that the treatment is static that was compared to drilling. In Moradi-Araghi et al. all the disclosed treatments refer to treatment not made during the drilling step, but post-drilling when the drill bit is removed or stopped or totally independently of a drilling step.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 1 though 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Myers et al. (US 6,777,377) in view of Moradi-Araghi et al. (US 5,789,350). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Currently, claim 1 clearly states that “A method of drilling a well comprising during said drilling of the well a stabilization treatment” is disclosed, which means that first the treatment can only apply dependently with a drilling step and secondly, the stabilization treatment can only be performed during said drilling step. Myers et al. impose a method for sealing porous or fractured subterranean formations during the drilling. However, Moradi-Araghi et al. does not disclose that the composition within is able to be used during drilling. Examiner clearly states that the composition is used “for the purpose of, but is not limited, to permeability alteration, water coning correction, water shutoff, gas shutoff, and zone abandonment. (col. 3, l. 2-4)” as mentioned by Moradi-Araghi et al. All those application refers to treatment applications not suitable to be used during drilling, wherein the rotation of the drill bite can disrupt the treatment steps. Nothing in Moradi-Araghi et al. teaches that the composition could be extended to any type of application and especially to use disclosed treatments in Moradi-Araghi et al. during a drilling step. Applicants want to remind that method of treatment not intended to be used during drilling are not suitable to be used during drilling, because of different and severe conditions coming from the environment close to the drill bit. Where some type of fluids can set or have special active properties in stationary flow, those fluids can never set or be unacted due to turbulent flow of the drill bit or due to strong mechanical forces of the drill bit impacting the active properties. So it can not be obvious for the person of ordinary skill in the art to employ the treatment composition of Moradi-Araghi et al. within the drilling/stabilizing method of Myers et

al., since the person of ordinary skill in the art is faced with first a technical obstacle forbidden him to combine treatment without drilling with treatment during drilling, and secondly with technical difficulties if trying to overcome said technical obstacle that he can only overcome through inventiveness.

Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Myers et al. in view of Moradi-Araghi et al. and in view of Fox et al. (US 5,849,674). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for the reasons stated above, same arguments applying to claim 7.

Claims 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Myers et al. in view of Moradi-Araghi et al. and in view of "Zirconium (IV) Chloride". Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. For the reasons stated above, the same arguments apply to claims 8 and 9. Further, the combination of Myers et al. and Moradi-Araghi et al. fails to suggest the use of a specific weak acid, nor is there motivation to use a zirconium chloride and acetate composition, especially to use a 5-20% solution of zirconium chloride in seawater.

Claims 11, 13, and 14, and claims 16 though 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Myers et al. in view of Moradi-Araghi et al. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for the reasons stated above, same arguments applying to claims 11, 13, and 14, and claims 16 though 18.

Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Myers et al. in view of Moradi-Araghi et al. and in view of Parris et al. (US 6,011,075). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. For the reasons stated above, same arguments apply to claim 10, and further Parris et al. method to enhance gel strength applies to application without a drilling step as stated above. Nothing in Parris et al. teaches that such method could be applicable during a drilling step.

Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Myers et al. in view of Moradi-Araghi et al. and in view of Gunn et al. (WO01/49971). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for the reasons stated above, same arguments applying to claim 15.

Applicants believe this reply to be fully responsive to all outstanding issues. This paper is submitted in response to the Office Action dated February 15, 2008 for which the five month date for response is July 15, 2008. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-2183 (Reference Number 21.1214).

Respectfully submitted,



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